

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 11300

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, NI,
A SHUM
SUBJECT: NEW NIGERIAN WARNS AGAINST FOREIGN LINKS WITH
NIGERIAN POLITICIANS

REF: A) LAGOS 8772, B) LAGOS 8562,) LAGOS 8550

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.

1. IN A SEPTEMBER 9 EDITORIAL ENTITLED " CALL
OFF THE AUCTION," THE NEW NIGERIAN (NN) EXPRESSES

CONCERN ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT ASPIRING
CIVILIAN POLITICIANS ARE SELLING OUT NIGERIA TO
VARIOUS FOREIGN COUNTRIES DURING THEIR TRAVELS
ABROAD.

2. NN EDITORIAL NOTES:
--"FOR SOMETIME NOW RIGHT THINKING NIGERIANS
HAVE BEEN VERY DEEPLY DISTURBED AT THE APPARENT
DETERMINATION OF SOME OF OUR POLITICIAN ASPIRANTS
TO AUCTION OFF OUR INDEPENDENCE TO FOREIGN
FINANCE. OF RECENT THERE HAS BEEN A HEAVY TRAFFIC
OF MANY SO-CALLED POLITICAL HEAVY WEIGHTS TO
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FOREIGN CAPITALS." NN COMMENTS, "IT IS TO BE
WONDERED WHAT THESE MEN COULD BE DOING IN LONDON,
PARIS, BONN, NEW YORK AND TEL AVIV."

3. NN EDITORIAL CONTINUES:
--"SINCE THEIR COMMON GROUND IS POLITICS--THE
INESCAPABLE CONCLUSION IS THAT THEIR TRAVELS ARE

NOT UNCONNECTED WITH THE BUSINESS OF NIGERIAN FUTURE POLITICS. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT WE MAY BE GOING BACK TO THOSE DAYS WHEN THE BEST INFORMATION ON OUR POLITICS WOULD BE OBTAINED ONLY IN FOREIGN CAPITALS.

--WITHOUT A DOUBT THESE JOURNEYS ARE BEING UNDERTAKEN IN THE QUEST FOR FOREIGN FINACE FOR THE POLITICALLY AMBITIOUS AND THIS IS A GREAT SHAME."

4. BY BEHAVING IN THIS MANNER, THE POLITICIANS, ACCORDING TO THE NN, "END UP BY DEMEANING OUR COUNTRY AND BELITTling ITS INTERNATIONAL STATURE AND ABUSE OUR OWN NATIONAL PHILOSOPHY. NOT ONE OF OUR NATIONAL SECRETS CAN BE CONSIDERED TO BE SAFE WITH ANY OF THESE PANHANDLERS." PUNCH CONCLUDES THAT THE FMG "SHOULD DO SOMETHING TO CALL OFF THAT AUCTION. SEEKING COOPERATION IS ONE THING BUT NATIONAL POLITICAL PROSTITUTION IS QUITE ANOTHER MATTER." END UNCLASSIFIED.

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5. COMMENT: AS WE HAVE IDICATED IN OUR REPORTING ON THE "LIBYAN CONNECTION" (REFTELS), WE BELIEVE THAT VARIOUS FOREIGN CONNECTIONS WITH NIGERIA'S CIVILIAN POLITICIANS COULD PROVIDE A LETHALLY CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPLOSIVE ELEMENT TO THE POLITICAL CHEMISTRY OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC. THUS, WE FIND NN'S LIST OF FOREIGN WATERING HOLES TO BE EXPECIALLY INTERESTING AND NOTE THAT IT OMITs SEVERAL POPULAR LOCATIONS. IN OUR VIEW, TWO ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM DESERVE MENTION. FIRST, THERE IS THE VERY REAL PROBLEM OF FOREIGN CONNECTIONS AND INFLUENCES WHICH ARE ALREADY DEVELOPING. IN THAT REGARD, WE CAN BE SURE THAT A PRIMARY FMG MOTIVATION FOR REDUCING THE SOVIET/CUBAN PRESENCE IN BENIN IS TO DECREASE THE PROBABILITY THAT COTONOU WILL BE USED AS A BASE FOR SOVIET CONNECTIONS IN THE NIGERIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM. SECOND, WE CAN READILY IMAGINE THAT FOREIGN CONNECTIONS - PAST, PRESENT, AND IMAGINARY- WILL PROVIDE NIGERIAN POLITICIANS WITH USEFUL CUDGELS WITH WHICH TO POUND EACH OTHER OVER THE HEAD. IN THAT REGARD, WE HAVE ALREADY HEARD A REPORT THAT CHIEF AWOLowo'S VARIOUS OPPONENTS HAVE BEEN COLLECTING "INFORMATION" ABOUT THE CHIEF'S SUPPOSED LINKS WITH THE C.I.A. AT SOME TIME IN THE PAST WHICH THEY PLAN TO SET FORTH ON THE POLITICAL MARKET PLACE AT AN APPROPRIATE MOMENT. END COMMENT.

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